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CULTURAL TRANSMISSION IN A RURAL, GERMAN COMMUNITY.

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF A SMALL (3,100), RURAL COMMUNITY IN SOUTHWEST GERMANY WAS STUDIED. DATA WERE GATHERED BY THE AUTHOR DURING TEMPORARY RESIDENCE IN THE TOWN AND FROM CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MAYOR, TEACHERS, OFFICIALS, AND TOWNSPEOPLE. TWO GENERAL CONCLUSIONS WERE MADE. FIRST, WHILE THE COMMUNITY RESIDENTS ENJOYED THE PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DEMOCRACY, ONLY THE STRUCTURE AND FORM APPEARED TO BE A REALITY. SECOND, INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT WAS MAKING MARKED CHANGES IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY. (LP)

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CULTURAL TRANSMISSION IN A RURAL, GERMAN COMMUNITY

Cooperative Research Project No. S-170

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PROBLEM

The growing impact of rapid industrialization and modernization in Germany imposes on the educational system of a rural community and on the community itself serious problems of cultural maintenance and change. The regional differentiations in dialect, religion, and local custom that have traditionally characterized rural Germany are giving way, often rapidly and painfully, to the leveling influences of an urban way of life. Deeply enmeshed in the relatively isolated, stable folk culture, the school of a small German community has traditionally operated to maintain and reinforce established cultural patterns, patterns functionally adapted to the local ecology and social system (i.e., extended family households integrated with small plot winegarden ecology).

Now the gross and dramatic changes in German society are extending in all directions the cultural milieu of the rural community. Consequently the school is confronted with a perplexing dilemma. The present form and content of education constitute a symbol of cultural stability and continuity (at least for the natives of the community), but as a positive force affecting stability they are less

functional. To sustain an effective role in the culture the school must adjust to the demands of cultural change but at a pace and in a way that will not jeopardize its contribution to cultural maintenance.

OBJECTIVES

To assess the role of the educational system as a mediator of the prevailing community culture and as a vehicle for affecting adjustments to cultural change is to be concerned with continuity and change--continuity as manifested in traditional educational practices and community approval of such practices, change or the prospect of change as manifested in specific modifications of established practices and in the changing attitudes and aspirations of the community toward the educational system. The relationship between continuity and change is seldom static in any culture; established values, attitudes, and behavior patterns are constantly absorbing or adjusting to new elements in the cultural environment. The press for a balanced, satisfying relationship is constant. Consequently, the educational system of a community is the object of continued observation and evaluation with respect to how

successfully it is helping to affect an acceptable balance. The relationship between continuity and change has constituted the general point of focus of this study. Specific issues and developments which bring this balance into question may vary from community to community. Several of particular interest to this investigation have included the following:

1. Implications of the increased emphasis on education for democracy.

The traumatic experience of the Nazi regime followed by the establishment and growing strength and stability of the West German Republic have served to focus considerable attention on the role of education in fostering and sustaining a commitment to democracy. Traditional patterns of curricula, teacher-pupil relationships, and parent-school relationships are necessarily being subjected to re-examination and debate as the commitment to democracy becomes more meaningful and urgent. The following questions have been especially relevant: What changes in educational practices and philosophy are being made in this community as a consequence of the re-examination indicated above? What strains in the operation of the educational system occur concomitant with these changes?

2. Various proposals and experiments in school reform

There is extant in West Germany today a vigorous discussion of proposed changes or modifications in the structure and organization of the school system. An increased awareness of education as an instrument of upward mobility is provoking a reappraisal of those structural characteristics which have tended to rigidify the traditional track system and channel students toward particular vocational pursuits at an early age. The impressive rise in the standard of living and the blurring of traditional class distinctions are forces creating an increased sensitivity to the contemporary efficacy and cultural viability of the educational system. The following questions have been especially relevant: What specific reforms have been instituted in the educational system of the community? To what specific pressures are they intended as a response? What unintended consequences have occurred as a result of this implementation?

3. The impact of a rapidly increased tempo of urbanization and industrialization upon the small, tradition-oriented community.

West Germany is notable for sharp regional differenes in custom, dialect, ecological pattern and social system. The small villages of Baden-Württemberg have in particular retained many of the local traditions of folk culture, and

the school systems of these small communities have historically been oriented toward preparation of youth for participation in the traditional and localistic culture. However, the migration of German-speaking populations from East Germany and from other locations since World War II, coupled with the rapid postwar industrial expansion and the expanding influence of urban-industrial centers, have challenged the validity of the way of life in the villages and small, rural-oriented towns. The following questions have been especially relevant: What specific areas of conflict and tension between tradition and the response to change can be delineated in the life of the community? How has the school system of the community responded to this challenge? How do curricular content, teaching personnel, teaching methods, and the relationship of the school to power groups in the local community reflect this response?

RELATED RESEARCH

1. "Bildungsnotstandgebiete", STUDIEN UND BERICHTE AUS DEM SOZIOLOGISCHEN SEMINAR DER UNIVERSITÄT TUBINGEN, Universität Tübingen, Nummer 5, 1965.

A report on research in particular areas in Baden-Württemberg where the percentage of pupils, identified as academically capable, who go on to higher education is

relatively small compared with the state average.

2. Friedl, Ernestine, VASILIKA, A VILLAGE IN MODERN GREECE, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1962.

In a study of a Greek village the author found that the school system played a vital role in cultural maintenance, particularly with regard to the reinforcement of family mores and value-commitments.

3. Kob, Janpeter, ERZIEHUNG IN ELTERNHAUS UND SCHULE, Ferdinand Enke Verlag, Stuttgart, 1963.

A sociological study in Hamburg of interrelationships among parents, pupils, and teachers with respect to attitudes toward school life, educational aspirations, etc. Attention is given to rising expectations in an increasingly industrial society.

4. Muller, Dr. Josef, STRUKTURWANDEL DES DORFES, Material-und Nachrichten-Dienst, Darmstadt, Number 77, 1956.

An analysis of social and economic changes that the German rural village is experiencing and the implications these changes have for the structure and content of education in the rural school.

5. Picht, George, DIE DEUTSCHE BILDUNGSKATASTROPHE, Walter Verlag, Freiburg, 1964.

A general polemic about the state of German education with particular attention to conditions leading to a shortage of Gymnasium and university graduates. The

book has been a major contribution in stimulating debate about the issue.

6. Schneider, Friedrich, DIE DORFSCHULE, Bayerischer Landwirtschaftsverlag, Munich, 1957.

An analysis of the German rural school in the light of expanding urban influences. Consideration is given to the curriculum, rural in its orientation, but which now must serve a population increasingly urban in its orientation.

7. Spindler, George D., EDUCATION AND CULTURE, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1963.

A variety of reactions to the prospect or threat of cultural change is possible. Articles by the editor and by Margaret Meade, J.L. Fischer, and Bernard Siegel are especially directed toward the analysis of the processes of adaptation to social, economic, and cultural change characterizing schools in different societies.

8. Vidich, Arthur and Vensman, Joseph, SMALL TOWN IN MASS SOCIETY, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, 1958.

The more formal, structured elements in a school culture may acquire significance beyond their original purpose. In this case the authors report that the school board of a small town came to have more important decisions to make than the village or town boards and that it had become the vital political arena for the confrontation of most community issues.

9. West, James, PLAINVILLE, U.S.A., Columbia University Press, New York, 1945.

Along with many other studies of American communities this one points to the school as both a mirror of and agent for the reinforcement of the community social structure.

10. Wurzbacher, Gerhard, DAS DORF IM SPANNUNGSFELD INDUSTRIELLER ENTWICKLUNG, Ferdinand Enke Verlag, Stuttgart, 1961.

A report on research conducted in forty-five West German communities. The results point to a transition in social controls as a result of the increased freedom of the individual from traditional family and neighborhood controls.

11. Wylie, Laurence, VILLAGE IN THE VAUCLUSE, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1961.

The significance of the educational system is given careful attention in this study of a French community. The author found that the patterning of behavior in the schools was more a reflection of the total culture than it was simply of the operational objectives of the schools themselves.

PROCEDURE

A small community in West Germany was judged an appropriate site for such a study for several reasons. Powerful legacies and developments converge on such a community and create different orientations toward the goals of the

educational system. They are: (1) the weight and veneration of historic traditions and loyalties, especially those which have a regional and local focus, (2) the reaction to and assessment of the Nazi experience by the younger and older generations, (3) the problems of assimilation involving large numbers of refugees and migrants, and (4) the postwar modernization and secularization of German society. Given these conditions, the educational system of a community has laid upon it rather serious demands. These conditions create a social ferment which has obvious research appeal.

A community in southwest Germany (Südbaden) was selected because this area has been traditionally rural and geographically isolated from earlier industrial developments in other parts of Germany. At the same time fortuitous personnel contacts in this area enhanced the possibilities of selecting a particular community without undue expenditure of time. Dr. George Spindler of Stanford University, director of the research, and members of the Arnold Bergstraesser Institute for Cultural Research in Freiburg offered recommendations as to possible sites. After arriving in the area I visited various communities and selected the one that seemed most appropriate.

In the selection process primary consideration was given to locating a rural, relatively isolated community which was beginning to experience industrialization directly. The size of the community was also an important factor. The community had to be small enough to make possible a relatively comprehensive analysis of the educational system and of the cultural milieu in which it was situated, but it had to be large enough to maintain an educational system adequate to justify such a study. It was anticipated that an appropriate size would be between 1500-3000 people. The community selected, Rebhausen, had a population of approximately 3000 (for purposes of this report the name of the community has been changed).

The design and objectives of this study made the role of participant-observer appropriate. It was my hope that opportunities to teach in the local school would materialize. No such role developed. However, the opportunities for observation were unlimited, and in this respect the local populace, especially community leaders, were very cooperative. My family and I arrived in Freiburg early in September, 1964, and had to remain there a month until several rooms were made available to us in Rebhausen. During September I made frequent trips to Rebhausen, first of all to become

better acquainted with community officials, especially the Mayor and the Principal, and secondly to start my son, age 12, in the local elementary school. In October we moved to Rebhausen and for a month occupied two rooms, eating our meals in local and nearby restaurants. In November we found a three-room apartment and finally settled down to housekeeping.

Shortly after moving I began systematic observations in the school, a good point of departure for several reasons. The school was central to the study, and it afforded me an opportunity to begin establishing contacts with a variety of individuals, particularly parents. For two months I attended school regularly, spending about a week in each of eight classes, and thereafter intermittently visited different classes as time allowed.

During this period I also attended innumerable public gatherings. The Mayor was from the beginning interested in the study and pleased that Rebhausen had been selected as the site. He overlooked no opportunity to help me become acquainted with life in Rebhausen, at least the more formal, organizational aspects. He never failed to invite me to meetings which concerned him directly. To others he made arrangements with appropriate officials.

In practically all cases I was introduced and my purpose for being in Rebhausen briefly explained. At that time of year, between harvest and planting, annual meetings of the various organizations proliferated. Consequently, between school in the morning and meetings at night, I was able to initiate many contacts in the early period of the study.

In the months that followed, formal interviews and informal conversations were held with a variety of individuals under a variety of circumstances. The Mayor and I met regularly at his office. The Principal and teachers I saw almost daily, either during or after school. The Catholic Priest and Evangelical Minister were both interested in the study, and I discussed frequently with them different aspects of life in the community. As other contacts developed, I followed them up with visits and interviews.

To achieve a more systematic and representative account of life in the community I arranged interviews with individuals representing different age groups, vocational pursuits, periods of residence, and particular social and organizational interests. Frequent use was made of a tape recorder.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA AND FINDINGS

1. History

Rebhausen, with a population of 3100, is located northwest of Freiburg and is one of a group of villages occupying a hilly and traditionally isolated section of southwest Germany.

Today, when one writes and talks of Rebhausen, the central consideration is "Weinbau und Industrie nebeneinander". In 1958 a factory was started, now employing over 900 workers. Prior to 1958 the focus of community life was, and to a considerable degree still is, "Weinbau"--wine cultivation. The residents reach far into the past to give depth and substance to the wine tradition. The label on the Rebhausen Cooperative wine bottle states that Rebhausen is the oldest wine community in Baden; the date, 670 A.D.

A mixture of fact and legend constitutes the history of the community. Archaelogical findings indicate that the Celts occupied the region as early as 300 B.C. Evidence of the subsequent occupation of the region by the Romans is pointed out in the form of a typically-built Roman road running through Rebhausen. The Romans were replaced by the Alemannen who had migrated from the Brandenberg region in

about 280 A.D. The Alemannen are considered the founders of Rebhausen.

Rebhausen is shaped roughly in the form of an L. The vertical part was once a separate village, Oberdorf, founded several hundred years after Rebhausen. The two villages were joined in 1838, but neither time nor the recent industrialization and influx of refugees and foreign workers have erased a consciousness of historical and cultural developments during the pre-1838 period. In the 14th century the area was acquired by the Hapsburgs who had achieved control over the Breisgau region in southwest Germany. The two villages were then split in half and the separate halves joined under the ownership of particular noble families. In the 16th century after the Reformation one of these holdings became Protestant; the other remained Catholic under Austrian administration. The political and religious history of this period is significant. Old time residents think and speak in terms of living either in Rebhausen or Oberdorf, and their children give expression at times to a certain rivalry between the two parts. The adults experience this history each Sunday in church. With few exceptions Rebhausen members sit on one

side, and those from Oberdorf on the opposite side. The residents are very conscious that Rebhausen is Protestant, the legacy of the earlier partition. They were quick to point out that I would have found the community quite different had the Markgraf with the greatest holdings not adopted the Protestant faith.

2. Wine cultivation

Two developments in the past year are both reality and symbol of the continuing significance of wine in the life of the community: (1) the expansion of the Rebhausen Wine Cooperative storage capacity from 1.2 million liters to 1.7 million liters, and (2) the initiation of the process whereby a particular section of grape terraces will be decisively improved and patterns of ownership consolidated.

Rebhausen is characterized by a wine culture. Wine is the chief cash crop. The farmer whose largest holdings is in grapes ranks among the wealthiest in the community. Most families own at least some grapés, regardless of the chief occupation of the husband. Mechanization, effective pest control, and more efficient marketing procedures have increased the production of wine. Hence the expansion of the storage capacity.

The improvement of the grape land itself and the

consolidation of land holdings is a more difficult process, complicated by the convergence of economic, political and social forces which strain to protect the past and at the same time adjust to the future. Landholdings among the farmers are markedly fragmented, a result of a tradition whereby all landholdings of the father were distributed equitably among all children. Through the years individual farms became smaller and less viable as economic units, but the tradition remained until the 1930's when the Nazi regime moved to outlaw such fragmentation (after the war such Nazi laws were rescinded but subsequently replaced by legislation having the same effect). In the midst of his scattered holdings the wine farmer is aware that the burgeoning European Common Market is an inevitability that threatens the sanctity of the protected market he now enjoys. He knows he should improve and consolidate and take every possible step to prepare for the influx of French wines.

But the decision is not simple. If he works in the factory and cultivates his grape holdings in off hours, there is not the same urgency as with the full-time farmer. In both cases, however, three years of grape harvest must be sacrificed. A particular section is marked for improvement and consolidation. Bulldozers strip away the small,

inefficient and often barely accessible terraces; new roads are built and new plantings made--and then the three year wait until the growth is sufficient to bring in a crop. Within the section the scattered holdings are consolidated, and there is always a question of whether or not the exchange among the owners will be advantageous to all. Finally, the process can not be initiated until 95% of all land holders approve. If a farmer had an unfortunate experience with a previous consolidation in another section or if he is generally disenchanted with the Mayor, who is largely responsible for industrializing the community, he may oppose the whole idea.

In this particular case, however, enough signatures were obtained. Countless meetings were held, committees were formed, recalcitrant farmers were visited and then called to the city hall where the Mayor applied all the power of his office to persuade them to sign. The whole process was generously lubricated with wine--at meetings, after the meetings in local restaurants, during personal visits to homes. It was a study of politics in a rural German community, a combination of fumbling efforts to make proper use of democratic procedures and of effective, forceful exploitation of the power and prestige of the

mayor's office.

3. Government and industrial development

In 1800 the population of Rebhausen was 2400; in 1960, 2500; in 1964, 3100. In the next few years it is anticipated that the population will climb to 4500. The sudden change in an otherwise traditionally constant population is due solely to the establishment of the plastics factory in 1958. That the factory chose to locate in Rebhausen was largely the results of the efforts of one man, the Mayor.

In a Baden community the mayor can be and usually is a powerful figure, occupying to an ever-increasing degree the high point in the traditional German community triumverate of mayor, priest and principal. The mayor's office is elective, the first time for eight years, thereafter for twelve. A large majority of mayors in this region are re-elected. The competition is not heated, and after the election the electorate settle into a routine relationship, becoming accustomed to having the mayor adjudicate the infinite and varied affairs of the community and of individuals. He is administratively beholden to the Gemeinderat, the legislative body elected on a rotating basis every four

years. The relationship can be dynamic. In the case of Rebhausen the typical member was an elderly farmer, reserved in public debate and content to protect the traditional rural Rebhausen. Consequently, the Mayor, a middle-age, energetic man with enthusiastic visions of a great new community, had pretty much his own way.

He wanted industry for the community. He had no university education or special training in public administration, but he was convinced Rebhausen had to have industry or stagnate. When he counted the number of residents who commuted to Freiburg, he set as a goal finding or creating work at home for these people.

The factory has irrevocably changed the tone and tempo of life in Rebhausen. It has fulfilled the Mayor's fondest dreams. It has meant a higher standard of living for most of the families. Its beneficient influence, albiet through taxes, on the appearance of the town and on the conveniences the town can offer is everywhere noticeable--paved streets where before 1958 there were dirt roads, a sewer system where once there were primitive outhouses, efficient garbage collection where once there was none, and, above all, a 7.2 hectare housing and industrial development (with swimming pool, tennis courts and even-

tually a seven story hotel) where once there was swamp land.

The housing development is within the town limits, but to the longtime residents it is "draussen"--outside. The executives, the foremen, and many of the workers are migrants from east and north Germany. They are on the average better educated, have higher educational aspirations for their children, talk faster and with more assurance. Those social and recreational activities so traditional in Rebhausen have not attracted many new residents. The tennis courts are the monument to the new Rebhausen--what the new residents find as a necessary addition to an otherwise plain and uninteresting community but what the natives find as totally superfluous.

4. Going to school in Rebhausen

There is a general feeling that the children of factory personnel are on the average smarter. Teachers disagree but observe that the former can express themselves with a freedom and clarity not generally characteristic of native children. The latter feel pressed by the increased competition; the former are at times disdainful of the "Bauernkinder". The social distance which separates the parents is reflected in the attitude of the children but to a smaller degree. The common school experience is tending to fuse the social and cultural differences of the two

groups into an even and rather colorless prototype of the industrial society.

Centralized authority in the school system is helping to affect a social amalgamation as it traditionally worked to protect regional differences. School reform developments include attention to an administrative structure and a curriculur content which will increase educational opportunities for those children, particularly in rural areas, whose education has traditionally been terminal with the elementary school. In Rebhausen this development is being accelerated by the growing influence of factory personnel who, as parents, support a more urbanized educational experience for their children.

Authority in the school system is exercised firmly and effectively, emanating from the state minister of education and implemented unilaterally at the various levels. Each functionary presses with the power allotted him on the next lower level; the process ends in the classroom where the teacher confronts the pupils and extracts from them a performance which will serve as acceptable legal tender in transactions with higher authorities. The highly structured school experience begins for the first grader the first day, and within a short period he is in at least tentative possession of a behavior pattern which is highly

instrumental to his success as a pupil throughout his school years. The emphasis is on orderliness, cleanliness and obedience. Appropriate posture is required for sitting and for writing. Children are to stand when reciting and when an adult enters the room. In the early grades handkerchiefs, hands, and fingernails are inspected; delinquents are shamed and sent to the washroom.

The academic content, like the socio-civic content, is rather rigidly structured. The rigidity imposed on teachers by higher authorities is experienced by pupils. The standard, statewide curriculum is delineated in careful detail, and teachers are sensitive to their obligation to cover the material in as much detail. Consequently, the lines of communication in the classroom run almost exclusively between individual pupils and the teacher. A question is asked; the pupil stands up. He can usually answer with one or two words but is trained to use complete sentences. If he can not answer--if he does not answer immediately--he is told to sit down and some one else is called on. The pattern is as typical in the 8th grade as in the first grade.

In the presence of an authority figure the growing child is taught to keep his more personal thoughts to himself. At the dinner table he is to eat in silence and

abstain from childhood or youthful chatter. In the classroom speculation, discussion, or debate are not instructional tools. In a public gathering, as an adult, his lack of experience in public dialogue leaves him either silent or talking in highly emotional tones. Only after the formalities, in the comradely atmosphere of a local restaurant, is the debate easily joined.

5. <u>The years 1933-1945</u>

For a small rural community situated in a non-industrial section of Germany the Nazi experience was not too disruptive of the life the people had always lived. The period is summarized by the residents in this fashion:

> The economy was stagnant and the farmer in especially bad straits. This Hitler changed. The standard of living rose steadily, and there was work for everyone. The community enjoyed order and security. No juvenile delinquents were allowed to roam the streets, and a woman could walk alone at night in the biggest city and the darkest streets without fear of harm. Political freedoms did disappear and that was regrettable. Before the people realized what had happened Hitler had more power than they

intended he should have. One had to be careful what one said. People were arrested suddenly and disappeared. But the atmosphere was not oppressive. There were no Jews in Rebhausen and that made a difference. When, however, the synagogue in a nearby village was burned, the people began to realize the dimensions of the Nazi ideology. But not until Russia was attacked in 1941 did they feel the full impact of the Nazi era. The worst time of all was in the closing months of the war when the SS wantonly shot or hanged soldiers and civilians who showed signs of surrender.

A thorough sampling of the experience Rebhausen residents had during the Nazi period was not easy to acquire. The subject invariably triggered a long and painful monologue of why it happened and how bad it was after 1940. To get at basic attitudes and understandings and to ascertain the extent of personal involvement required a kind of ruthless interrogation which seriously endangered the basic rapport between interviewer and interviewee. But this fact is in itself significant. The Nazi period remains for the Rebhausen populace unexamined; its chief legacy is the

preponderant attitude of being fed up with politics.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

1. While Rebhausen residents enjoy the privileges and responsibilities of a democracy, only the structure and form is a full-blown reality. The content is restrained by many institutions which have a strong authoritarian character.

a. The patriarchal family pattern is typical. The father is dominant and exercises stern discipline over the children. Corporal punishment is customary, at least up to age 14. Children typically identify the father as an object of anxiety.

b. The teacher-pupil relationship is consistently and strictly authoritarian. Corporal punishment is available and often used, i.e. twisting the ear, pulling the hair on the nape of the neck, slapping the face, or using a stick across the fingers.

c. The teacher-state relationship is unilateral. Local control is limited to buildings. Teacher promotion is largely dependent on the assessment (periodical and in detail) of teacher performance by state officials.

d. The relationship of education to developing democratic institutions remains tenuous. Centralized

authority in the school system and teachers' apprehensions about the growing freedom of youth operate to restrict changes in educational practice and philosophy. However, the traditional sanctity of the teaching staff is slowly being eroded as parental involvment in school affairs increases. For many teachers this development is unsettling.

e. Local government is, like the Federal Republic, democratic, but the populace is restricted in the opportunities to develop skill in public debate and action. The long term of office of the mayor accustoms the citizens to community leadership that, good or bad, they can not easily change.

f. The Nazi legacy has reinforced political apathy.

g. The church leadership in the community is seeking to help the community adjust to the industrial and democratic society, but this leadership is limited by the ultimate authority of the church, expressed primarily through the church tax and through what amounts to compulsory church membership.

2. The industrial development is affecting marked changes in the traditional life of the community.

a. Educational aspirations of native children are being raised. An increasing number of elementary school graduates are going on to more education rather than going to work immediately.

b. Parental ties are loosening. Parents can not or do not exercise the same control over, for example, the expenditure of a wage a young man earns. The younger generation shows a noticeable disinterest in many of the traditionally venerated village customs and ceremonies.

c. Where social contacts develop between natives and refugees, these contacts are generally nurtured within the social milieu of the latter, i.e., bowling, rather than the former, i.e., the men's choir.

d. The legislative organ of the local government, the Gemeinderat, is slowly assuming a more forceful and representative role as factory personnel are elected to office.

e. Widespread school reform proposals are being implemented which will help the school function more effectively as an instrument or mediator of social change. The 5th and 6th grades began this year the study of English, a subject which for most of the populace is both symbol and reality of a new era. There are indications, however, that this kind of development is producing changes in the educational aspirations of young people at a faster rate than many parents can absorb.